

Historical Awareness Subcommittee Report

Date: 4/26/18

To: General Studies Council

From: Historical Awareness Subcommittee

Julie Holston, Chair

Jason Bruner

Manisha Master

Matt Simonton

Re: Recommendations for Course Proposals (H designation)

Recommend for Approval

From ASU: (none)

From MCCCDC: (none)

Recommend for Revise/Resubmit

From ASU:

CEL 100 Great Ideas of Politics and Ethics

Rationale: The proposer indicates that the course does not meet criterion 3, and all four criteria must be fulfilled for approval. Therefore, the committee extends the opportunity for a Revise/Resubmit to include a rationale and evidence for criterion 3. Additionally, it is not clear how the listed texts will be contextualized with respect to institutions, technologies, or other developments. The committee requests more detailed information regarding how students will be asked to demonstrate historical awareness with respect to the development of the ideas in relation to the texts included on the syllabus. A table of contents for the required textbook should also be included.

CEL 300 Capitalism and Great Economic Debates

Rationale: While the course seems to generally meet the spirit of the Historical Awareness designation, it is not clear that the textbook or course engages in a systematic study of these issues, nor is it apparent that there is evidence of a reciprocity of, in this case, ideas shaping various contextual conditions and those conditions shaping the ideas. Additionally, there is no description of the assignments beyond “3-page paper”, “7-page paper”, etc. More information is needed about the nature of these assignments to determine the extent to which historical analysis and engagement are being expected of the students.

CEL 394 Democracies in Crisis

Rationale: While the course is structured around primary source readings, the manner in which students are asked to engage these texts is with respect to contemporary application. Further information is therefore needed on the nature of historical analysis being asked of students in the assignments and discussions. Additionally, it’s not clear from the syllabus to what extent the different societies in question are understood as being affected by one another’s examples in sequential order, nor is it clear how historical information is being utilized with respect to transitions between periods.

CEL 394 Ideological Origins of Anglo-American Liberty

Rationale: While the course description and learning outcomes indicate that the course is designed to meet the spirit of the criteria, it’s not clear how students are held accountable for historical analysis and engagement throughout the course. Further information is needed regarding the nature of the written assignments in order to understand how the learning outcomes are achieved and assessed.

PHI 107 Introduction to Philosophy of Sex and Love

Rationale: The proposer neglected to complete page 3 of the application, which is supposed to contain the rationale and evidence for how the course meets the criteria. Additionally, the committee has concerns that the historical overview provided during the first half of the course does not extend to the second half of the course, where the focus seems to be a philosophical overview of contemporary topics in sex and gender. In addition to completing page 3, the committee requests more information regarding how systematic historical analysis will be sustained throughout the entirety of the course, along with information on how students will be assessed on historical knowledge/awareness through the assignments.

From MCCCD: (none)

Recommend for Denial

From ASU:

CEL 494 Political Thought of Islam, Hinduism, and Confucianism

Rationale: The course as it is currently structured does not meet the criteria for the Historical Awareness designation. For example, it does not appear that history is a focus of the course. The orienting questions of the course make clear that the purpose of the course is comparative philosophy and not historical inquiry. The weekly topics do not indicate that systematic historical analysis will be expected of the students throughout the course, and the descriptions of the two major essay assignments do not include any mention of historical analysis. Additionally, it is not clear how the political philosophy textbook will be contextualized historically, nor how students will be engaging texts with attention to historical methods, rather than those of comparative political philosophy. Finally, the different political-philosophical movements do not seem to be conceived of in historical terms, as inhabiting a particular context and changing over time, and the different societies in question are not explored in such a way as to present a coherent vision of changing institutions over time.

From MCCCD: (none)